



## **OED and Conexus Indiana Sponsor Defense Focus Group Conference**

Over 50 representatives from companies and educational institutions from across Indiana attended a Defense Asset Study Focus Group Conference held February 5, 2008 in Indianapolis. Companies such as General Dynamics, Raytheon and Rolls-Royce, as well as schools such as Purdue, Indiana University, IPFW and Taylor University took part. During the opening segment, focus group successes were featured. Since the Defense Asset Study was completed earlier this year, a number of projects stemming from the focus groups the study spawned have been launched and met with success. As a direct result of the Study and subsequent focus groups, Indiana stands to benefit from over \$66 million in defense contracts that have already been won, or are in the pipeline.

(pictured: Brian Tanner, TMG Labs)





The second segment was a "call to arms" that offered 4 focus group organizations the opportunity to advertise their interest in a particular defense project, as well as call for partners and collaborators: The Naval Warfare Center Crane group was represented by John Dement. Mark Smith spoke for the Purdue based WIRED group. Don Takehara from Taylor University outlined the Space Electronics Grand

Challenge, and Brian Tanner presented for TMG Labs. (pictured: Don Takehara, Taylor University)

The third segment of the conference allowed focus group companies the opportunity to provide a quick "elevator speech" on their companies for free marketing and networking.

Among the prime moments of the conference, a strategy session led by OED's Jason Lovell and Conexus Indiana's Lisa Laughner was designed to build programming assistance to small businesses in the area of defense contracting. In August of 2007, OED held its first basic defense contracting workshop and this session explored the vision of a longer term and committed program. Small businesses expressed serious interest in receiving education in areas such as government contract vehicles (e.g. GSA Schedules, IDIQs, GWACs, etc.), post contract assistance (e.g. cost accounting) and general training on the culture of government contracting (e.g. federal budgets, how to sell to feds).

Directly following the conference, the Space Defense Electronics focus group held a workshop to begin the design of a Grand Challenge in for the State of Indiana. This would be similar to federal Grand Challenges that are designed to unleash the private sector on a specific problem with the intent of finding creative solutions. 14 groups took part in this initial work session. It is expected that this Grand Challenge will bring out Indiana's best to work together to solve a problem of monumental impact to society resulting in major breakthroughs in science and technology and even putting Indiana on the map with international attention.

One of the companies involved in a Defense Asset Study focus group is inviting you to a Balloon Launch and Workshop in Columbus, Indiana. TMG Labs is conducting the workshop for students and others interested in learning more about applications for lighter than air platforms, Flight Path predictions, Payload design and more. The Balloon Launch and Workshop is February 28th from 11:00a to 5:00pm at the Columbus-Bakalar Municipal Airport. The workshop is being conducted by TMG Labs and Indiana University-Purdue University/Columbus. For more information, contact Margaret Ratcliff, [mratchliff@purdue.edu](mailto:mratchliff@purdue.edu)

Presentations will be made available through the OED Web site. For more information about this conference and the Indiana Defense Asset study, contact OED's Jason Lovell at [jlovell@oed.IN.gov](mailto:jlovell@oed.IN.gov), or Lisa Laughner at Conexus Indiana, [LLaughner@conexusindiana.com](mailto:LLaughner@conexusindiana.com). The Indiana Defense Asset Study was produced through a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, and administered by the Indiana Office of Energy & Defense Development. Download the study at [www.Energy.IN.Gov](http://www.Energy.IN.Gov).

